Mount Wachusett Community College

Spring 2012

Volume 3 • Number

CareerFocus™

Technology-based Careers

The Happiness Factor

Top Tips for Adult Learners

Are You LinkedIn Yet?

Advance in Your Career with a Laddering Plan

Enrollment & Financial Aid Demystified

Reverse Transfer to Redirect Your Career

Mount Wachusett Community College

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Spring classes begin Jan. 18!

8 Week Cycle II courses begin March 19!

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Students new to MWCC, or those who have not taken courses at MWCC in the past 12 months can:

- **Apply online at www.mwcc.edu/cf**, or
- Contact the admissions office at 877-324-6815, or in person

All new students are required to attend a new student welcome session, complete college placement testing, and must meet prerequisite requirements prior to course selection.

Continuing Students

- Go to www.mwcc.edu, click on **"iConnect,"** or
- Contact the Advising Center at 978-630-9109, or stop by room 116 at the Gardner Campus
- Leominster Campus: 978-630-9810
- Devens Campus: 978-630-9569

Course Schedules

- Courses fill fast and new sections open continuously. Find the most up-to-date listings online: **www.mwcc.edu**

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE'S DREAM?

Let us show you how to achieve it!

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5 – 8 PM

FREE EDUCATION & CAREER PLANNING WORKSHOP

Session I • 5–6 PM
Session II • 6:30–7:30 PM
Gardner Campus • North Café

Learn how to discover your ideal career and the steps you can take to get there.

FREE CAREER FAIR EXPO

Gardner Campus • Commons

- Chat with faculty about the programs that best fit with your dreams
- Meet staff members who support students every step of the way
- Hear real-life stories from alumni
- Talk with students as they give you a tour of the campus
- Enjoy refreshments and register for a door prize

Space is limited for the workshops. Reserve your space today!
Call 978-630-9109 to reserve a spot in either session and give us your full name, email address and phone number so we can remind you prior to the event.

Visit Mount Wachusett Community College on the web at www.mwcc.edu

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CareerFocus™

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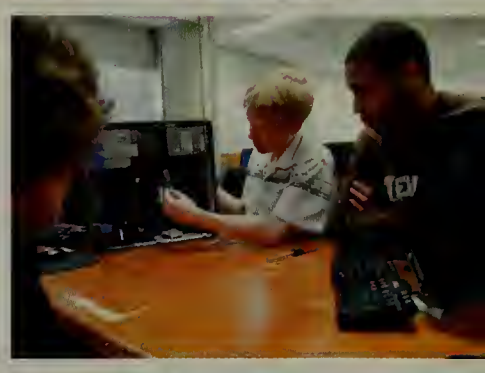
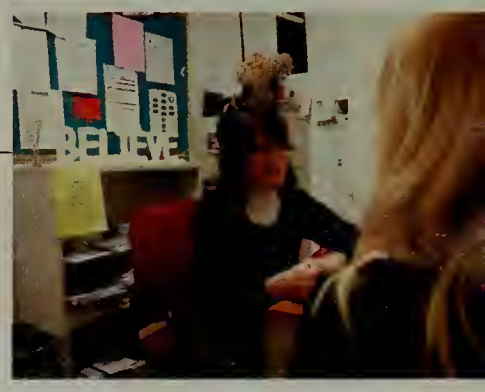
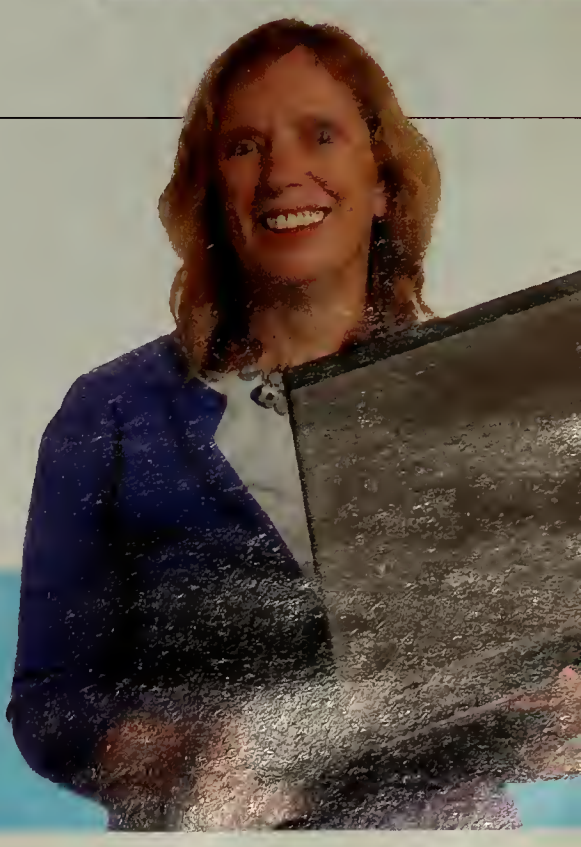






On the Cover:

MWCC alumna Cindy Knox, IT Systems Administrator, Town of Shirley.

Mount Wachusett Community College

Feature

Are you happy with your job? Almost half of Americans say "No!"

Risk

Changing your job could change your life

Okay, so you have a job. It might not be your dream job, yet in today's uncertain economy, being employed with some health benefits and a retirement plan seems perhaps a fair trade for a dream deferred, right?

Sure, it could be worse

Well, let's consider—folks who worked at a company for 20 years or more have seen their 401k plans evaporate in a fog of corporate scandal, outsourcing has led to massive job cuts, not to mention the unhappy circumstances of those who worked for companies that have closed their doors.

So if job security is just an illusion, why not resurrect that long delayed plan to pursue your true calling in life?

"True job security is fulfilling your heart's passion," says professional career counselor Melanie Fuscaldo. She worked for seven years as a career counselor at a university before leaving in 1992 to pursue her dream of opening her own counseling firm.

Fuscaldo is one of those people who subscribe to the adage: Find a job you love, and you'll never work a day in your life.

"I love being in private practice; I love working with clients; it's my passion," she says. "Work and play are the same for me. I ask my clients, when they wake up in the morning are they joyous, do they look forward to the day or do they want to pull the covers back over their head?"

Those who are unemployed will tell you that looking for a job is a full-time job, and they have a built-in economic incentive to change their circumstances. However, many people who are employed are finding that while they don't necessarily hate their job, or dislike their boss, they often ask themselves the question, "Is this what I'm going to do for the rest of my life?"

Or it could be better

After you've gotten past the initial obstacles to making a change, such as comfortable career inertia or fear of the unknown, one of the first things career counselors recommend is self assessment. Taking a long and searching look at what you really want to do is critical to making that first step toward your goal.

According to Nancy Greenlaw, career counselor at Mount Wachusett Community College, many students return to college after dissatisfaction with a career that wasn't a good fit. Many had selected their career path for the wrong reasons. "They pursued a job that paid well, or a job that a parent or other relative had found to be very satisfying without realizing that these jobs may be totally wrong for them," says Greenlaw. "The key is to identify your interests, what you are really passionate about, and set goals around that passion."

Greenlaw suggests that students take a personality inventory test to determine their natural inclinations and then explore careers that

Happiness

would best suit those. At that point, potential career-changers should determine what the job outlook is for careers they are considering; determine if the projected salary range will work for them; and then explore further to determine the education level needed for that job.

"MWCC is a great starting point for many who are unsure of their career direction," says Greenlaw. "There are unlimited directions for students. They can prepare for immediate entry into the world of work, or they can take advantage of transfer agreements that will get them to a four-year college while saving them time and money."

Greenlaw helps hundreds of students each year navigate the career exploration and development process so they can prepare for a career that will be satisfying to them.

"There can be fear involved," Fuscaldo says. "I always suggest that clients talk to a number of people in the field they are considering." Job shadowing, volunteer work and lots of research are keys to discovering whether the new career is the right career. One person's dream job could be another's nightmare.

Open the door

Research, networking, and counseling are the tangible tasks of making a change in your career. However, Fuscaldo believes there are intangible elements.

"The key is to identify your interests, what you are really passionate about, and set goals around that passion."

Nancy Greenlaw
Career Counselor, MWCC

Taking a risk, stepping out in faith, having the courage to make a change is something that Fuscaldo nurtures and encourages in herself and in her clients. "I've noticed that when I work with clients, they'll say 'I don't have the money to open a business,' but then you start seeing doors opening for them and things happening in ways you never expected," she says. "Things start to fall into place."

Fuscaldo says she's seen it happen over and over again. "That's the trust piece," she says. "When people are pursuing their passion, they are getting into alignment with their gifts, and when you put your gifts out into the world, I believe you are rewarded for it."

Growing Fields in Massachusetts

Below are occupations that are projected to have a large number of job openings in Massachusetts through 2018, according to CareerOneStop, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Training for all these careers is available at MWCC!

Career	Employment 2008	Job openings
Registered Nurses	83,320	2,930
Licensed Practical Nurses	17,050	700
Preschool Teachers	18,950	620
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	11,390	440
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	17,180	330
Dental Hygienists	5,950	260
Insurance Sales Agents	7,730	230
Medical Records & Health Information Technicians	5,760	220
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technicians	7,670	210
Paralegals & Legal Assistants	7,230	180

Feature

Top Tips for Adult Learners

Why non-traditional students are so successful in college

By Angela Marini

Nervous about starting or returning to college as an adult? You're not alone. Many adults are hesitant to return to the classroom after being in the workforce, but in reality, those real life experiences are what make non-traditional students so successful.

Mount Wachusett Community College is a great place to start as a non-traditional student. Flexible class schedules with options of days, nights, and online classes are only the foundation of the encouraging environment MWCC offers for non-traditional students. "The faculty at MWCC is very supportive and they enjoy having adults in the classroom," explains Dr. Melissa Fama, vice president of Academic Affairs at MWCC. "In fact, adult learners tend to achieve extremely high academic marks, due to the fact that they have more life experiences and are able to organize and juggle their schedules better."

At MWCC, many students are 25 and older, making it unlikely that an adult learner would be the only non-traditional student in the classroom. Many adult learners are returning to the classroom for career changes or because they are ready to take a risk to try something new.

"For many adult learners, the biggest challenge is often overcoming the fear of failure," says Fama. "Once students realize that they are capable of succeeding in the classroom, the students tend to surpass their own academic goals. Just because you didn't do well before, whether in high school or at another college, does not mean that you can't do well now." Another positive factor for adult students is that they have more realistic goals. These goals help them succeed in the long term because they are more easily attainable.

For tips on returning to college, the faculty and staff at MWCC offer some great advice to help you achieve your academic goals.

1 "Start recruiting for your "success team" from day one. Talk to your family, friends, advisors, professors, neighbors, day care providers, bosses, and anyone else in your life that can support you in meeting your goals. Surround yourself with support. You will face trying times; that's life. But in those tough times you will have a team in place to get you through."

Karen Costa, Director of Student Success

2 "For some non-traditional students, going back to school can be stressful, intimidating, and down-right scary. But success in higher education is like any other kind of success in life: you need to create an environment in which you can succeed. After that, it's easy. One of the best ways to feel more comfortable is to get involved and make connections with other non-traditional students who would have similar concerns and feelings. MWCC has a non-traditional student association which can provide you with that valuable support network. So my best advice to non-traditional students is to make sure you reach out and join in the exciting Student Life opportunities at MWCC!"

Greg Clement, Assistant Dean of Student Services

3 "During an economic downturn, where the competition for jobs is at an all-time high, MWCC is the place to be! Updating skills, building new networks, and stepping outside of one's comfort zone takes courage but it can also be your ticket to success in the job world. While at MWCC, in addition to class work, take advantage of support services including Career Placement.

Patricia Brewerton, Coordinator, Career Planning & Placement

4 "The staff of the LaChance Library and Academic Support Center enjoys working with students who are full of maturity and life experience, as it enriches the interactions and the relationships we establish with our students. Adult learners are often more comfortable asking for assistance, which makes them more successful as students and better able to take full advantage of academic support services such as those provided by the librarians and tutors.

Heidi N. McCann, Dean, Library and Academic Support Services

5 "Take the time to apply for Financial Aid even if you think you may not qualify. Since financial aid deadlines are important, it is beneficial to have your application on file early in case your circumstances change after you begin enrollment. Apply online for free at www.fafsa.edu.gov."

Kelly A. Morrissey, Director of Financial Aid

6 "Do it because you love it! Take a class on poetry, art, or computers because you want to know more about the topic. Even if you have never done it before, you can learn something new, have some fun, and maybe find a new passion."

Debra Boucher, Assistant Director of Advising

7 "Adult learners are among our best students. They're motivated, they've been out in the real world, and have seen what they don't want and have set goals to achieve what they hope will be the beginning of a new and better life. They're masters at juggling jobs, families, household chores and coursework; good time-management as they say. That experience is invaluable. Have confidence in your life skills and your ability to juggle priorities."

William Nutting, Department Chair and Professor of Microbiology and Biology

8 "The most important thing to remember is that you are not alone! Information from the Association for Nontraditional Students in Higher Education shows that students aged 25 and over comprise up to 47 percent of the student population in US Colleges! As a nontraditional student embarking on a new journey, remember that college can change your life. I guarantee that there will be good times and difficult times, but that the rewards from your college experience will far outweigh the sacrifices you will make. If you believe in yourself, you can be successful in college! I urge you to embrace learning, reach out for support from faculty and staff, make new friends in your courses and you will be a valuable part of the Mount Wachusett community. My best piece of advice is to keep on trying, and never ever give up!"

Sheila Murphy, Professor of Psychology and Human Services

9 "Establish a rapport with your professors. Ask questions, engage in classroom discussions, and meet with your professor during their office hours. Try not to be too hard on yourself; it takes time to get back in the swing of things."

Rosanne Morel, Department Chair and Professor of Early Childhood Education

10 "The hardest step for adult learners is often making the commitment and enrolling in college courses. Students struggle with the fear of the unknown after being out of the educational pipeline, the thought of being in classrooms with 18- to 20-year-olds fresh out of high school, and trying to juggle job and family responsibilities. Just know that these are not insurmountable issues. Hundreds of non-traditional students come to Mount Wachusett Community College every year. They become involved in student clubs and programs like Visions and Rx to build campus connections; find that their professors and fellow students often appreciate the motivation and valuable life experience that they bring to classrooms; and find that using the skills in their circle of family and friends helps them manage the demands of college. Coming back and educating yourself is possible if you really want it!"

Gaurav Khanna, Director of TRIO Student Support Services Programs

Busy mother of three adds college into the mix

Christine Eck

With three children ranging in age from 9 to 18, volunteer commitments, and three student leadership positions at Mount Wachusett Community College, Christine Eck is still able to find time to hit the books. Majoring in human services, Eck is able to do it all because she gives everything she does her all. "If I'm going to do something, I'm going to put my heart into it," she says.

Eck, who is a Student Ambassador, member of the Student Government Association, and treasure of the Human Services Club, decided to enroll in college with the purpose of gaining a sense of independence. As a bonus, she has also been able to teach her children that a person should never stop learning and that anything is possible.

Being the first woman in her family to attend college, the Barre resident chose MWCC because of the intimate size and location. "I found that as a community college, MWCC has smaller class sizes and more accommodating professors. Also, the idea of attending a community college was less threatening than attending a four-year college as an adult learner who has been out of the work force," explains Eck.

Although she admits she originally found the experience of returning to school somewhat intimidating, being an adult learner has given her an edge in the classroom. Among the biggest advantages, she is extremely focused and very determined to get her degree. However, being an adult learner does have its challenges as well. "I find that I have to spend more time studying because of how much technology has changed." She has been able to overcome any difficulties in the classroom because of the support and encouragement she receives from her family.

After earning her associate degree, Eck would like to continue on for a bachelor's degree, preferably through one of MWCC's 3 + 1 transfer programs.

"Going to school has been a great experience for me," she says. "I'm like a brand new person."

– Angela Marini

"For many adult learners, the biggest challenge is often overcoming the fear of failure. Once students realize that they are capable of succeeding in the classroom, the students tend to surpass their own academic goals."

Dr. Melissa Fama
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Feature

LinkedIn: An Ace in Your Professional Pocket

By Sarah McMaster

LinkedIn is a social network similar to Facebook or MySpace in many ways, but different in one distinct aspect: it is for professionals in their professional capacity. It's the world's largest professional network and includes more than 120 million people from across the globe, from CEOs to local consultants, and from nonprofit volunteers to corporate investors.

LinkedIn offers many of the features one would expect in a social network. Members create *Personal Profiles*. *Connections* are people in your network. *InMail* is the LinkedIn version of a private message. You can update your status, share links, and find out what your colleagues are up to all with a few clicks of your mouse. A personalized directory of professionals spanning every industry and profession are one search away. This is the potential of LinkedIn, but it takes time to get there.

Why should I spend time on LinkedIn?

LinkedIn can be a powerful resource for networking, a job search, or building your reputation. Like any social media experience, you get back what you put in. At its very basic level, a LinkedIn profile is your online resume. It's available and ready to come up in internet search results 24/7. Having a LinkedIn profile helps you have a polished professional presence on the internet. These days, with nearly half of employers saying they use social media to screen job candidates, according to careerbuilder.com, having a professional profile easily available online is a must.

How can LinkedIn help me advance my career?

The number one way LinkedIn can help you advance your career is by using the powerful and personalized job search feature. You can search by location, find out who you know who is connected to potential job postings or companies, or limit your search to your local region.

In the job market? If you have taken the time to complete your LinkedIn profile and have internet access, you will never be caught without your resume no matter where you are. Because LinkedIn is a web-based social site, you can log in at any computer with internet access. Once you're logged in, you can use the built-in PDF export feature to instantly create a professional looking resume from your profile to print or email anywhere.

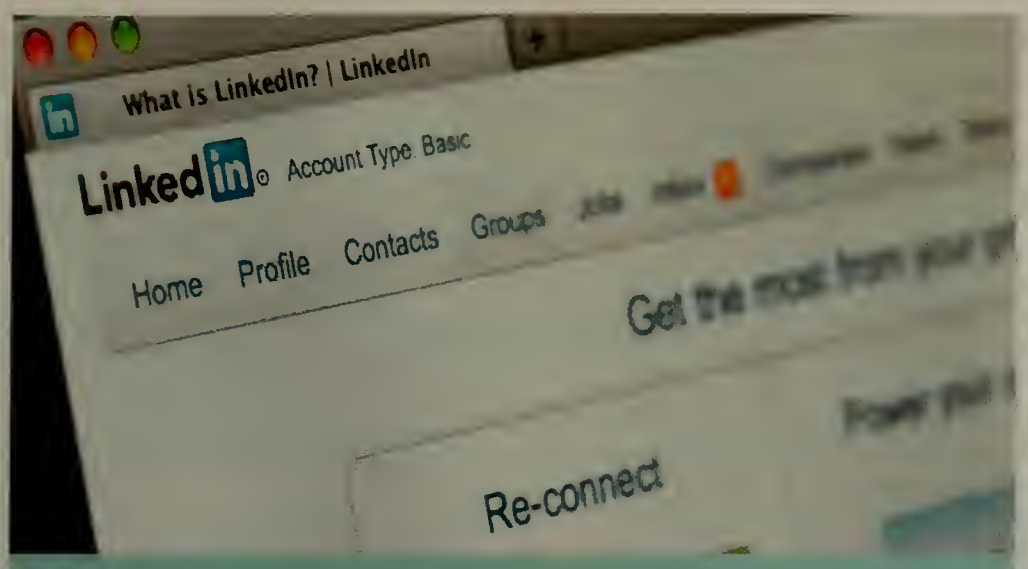
What if you're not looking for a job? LinkedIn can help you advance your career if you are entry-level right out of college, mid-career, or a seasoned professional.

For the college grad

You've finished college and have finally landed the entry-level job in the field or company of your dreams – now what? Successful people keep their eye on the prize and so should you. Dress for the job you want, not the job you have, and make use of powerful tools like LinkedIn. It could be the difference between you and another candidate when that opening in the company comes along.

LinkedIn has a *Recommendations* feature where connections can give you endorsements to post on your profile as testimonials. As a newcomer to the work environment, you should work hard, produce results, and then ask your supervisors for a recommendation.

Carol Cullins, assistant director of enrollment management, uses LinkedIn and other social media to connect with friends of MWCC, like Mike Amburgey of Lunenburg and George Janicello of Baldwinville.



How do I get started?

Getting started on LinkedIn takes about 30 minutes and is easy to do because LinkedIn offers a tutorial that walks you through all the steps and lets you know what you still need to complete to make your profile as robust as possible.

Here's what you need to do:

- Set up your profile and be sure to include keywords specific to your position, industry or company. This will help your profile show up in the built-in LinkedIn search feature. For example: When someone in your network searches for a "website consultant" and you have that keyword phrase in your profile, your profile will come up in those search results.
- Find connections using the built-in tool. It can check your Outlook or other email account and let you know who is already on LinkedIn and available to connect.
- Find and join some groups that are relevant to your work. You can use the search feature or find groups that your connections have joined.
- Explore profile add-ons to customize your profile and add value. There are many to choose, from ones that display your reading list to those that share your presentation slides.
- Ask for and give some recommendations!

Don't be afraid to ask college professors, mentors, or anyone else who can write about your skills, talents and accomplishments.

Another great way to help advance your career using LinkedIn is to join relevant groups and use it as an opportunity to learn and gain knowledge about trends, industry-specific concerns, or to become aware of the movers and shakers to watch. For example, if you are a copy writer in the publishing industry, you could join the Boston Creative Professionals group to learn about conferences, workshops, and items of interest to others in your field.

For the mid-career professional

Already had a promotion or two and well established in your company or industry? If you're a mid-career professional, LinkedIn provides great opportunity for you, too. Consider it a networking tool. No more breakfast networking meetings before heading into the office; you can go digital and get the same results.

Pass digital business cards by requesting to connect on LinkedIn with professionals and colleagues you meet at conferences, local events, or industry group meetings. Not only will you share your basic contact information, but you'll learn much, much more about your LinkedIn connections, from where they used to work to professional associations they belong to or their recent presentations or publications.

As someone with some expertise and experience, the *Groups* feature of LinkedIn is also a spot to spend some time. Organized much like a forum or blog, groups are concept-, profession-, industry- or interest-specific groups shared by LinkedIn members to post questions, share resources, and generally network in a more specific environment. Find and become active in 5 to 10 groups. Make it your mission to add value. You have valuable knowledge, expertise and resources to share with your peers. Down the road, if you want to make a job change or are seeking a promotion, this work will pay dividends for you.

Another great place to build your reputation as an up-and-coming expert is the *Answers* section of LinkedIn. Members post questions and receive answers from other members who have expertise in the area of each particular question. The questions are posted by category and are searchable. As a mid-career professional, spending a few minutes answering questions in areas where you possess knowledge and expertise is time well spent if you are seeking to build your reputation and credibility as an expert in your field. Conversely, if you are stumped by a request from coworkers or asked to complete a project a little "outside the box," this is a great place to ask questions to point you in the right direction.

For the upper management professional

You've paid your dues, put in quite a few years, and made it to the proverbial corner office. You are upper management. LinkedIn is still a great resource for you, too.

LinkedIn is a robust option to find new talent to bring into your organization. Looking for an up-and-coming star in a technology-specific role? LinkedIn job postings and search feature were custom made for you.

Since you've already climbed the ladder, why not help someone else up to the next rung? Give recommendations to those you've supervised in the past or vendors who you would recommend anyway. It's a great way to strengthen existing relationships and build new ones, too.

As mentioned previously, the *Answers* area of LinkedIn is a great place to share knowledge with your connections and the larger LinkedIn audience. LinkedIn groups offer an easy way to stay informed on new trends without spending too much time making calls and reading industry journals that may already contain dated material. LinkedIn groups are dynamic and updated in real-time. This is the way to keep your ear to the ground these days.

Having a LinkedIn profile helps you have a polished professional presence on the internet. These days, with nearly half of employers saying they use social media to screen job candidates, according to careerbuilder.com, having a professional profile easily available online is a must.

Feature

The Unlimited Potential of Technology-based Careers

Because technology is so commonplace in the modern work environment, the difference between computer careers and other careers is a bit of a gray area. Educators, first responders, sales associates, administrators, and even delivery truck drivers all rely heavily on computer technology in their day to day jobs.

Above and beyond this level of technology use, there are "tech careers" including computer science, programming, graphic and web design, and broadcasting and electronic media. If you would like to pursue this type of career, you'll need to get some credentials under your belt.

The Speed of Technology

Today computers do much more than simply compute: supermarket scanners calculate our grocery bill and tally remaining inventory scan by scan; computerized telephone switching centers play traffic cop to millions of calls and keep lines of communication untangled; and automatic teller machines let us conduct banking transactions from virtually anywhere in the world. Today's businesses use these technologies and are looking for employees who understand how to use technology to increase productivity, cut costs, better serve customers and increase profits.

Mount Wachusett Community College offers many computer courses that provide training you'll need to help businesses do just that. Whether you are a computer geek or a beginner, the Computer Information Systems (CIS) department at MWCC prepares you for lucrative careers in this in-demand field.

Helpdesk/IT Support Specialist

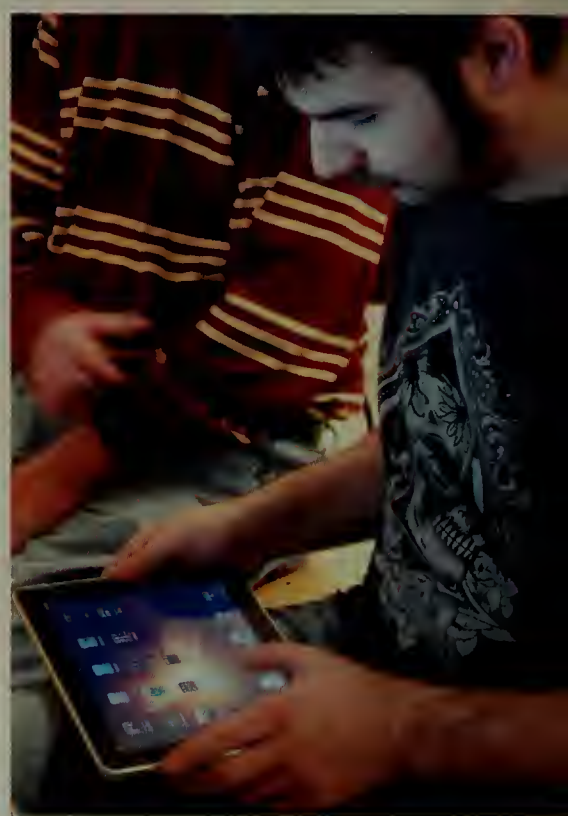
Because most businesses rely heavily on their computer systems for their day-to-day operation, people are needed to maintain, support, and keep them up and running. IT support specialists answer questions and resolve computer problems for clients, making them the "go to" people in many businesses.

MWCC's IT Support Specialist Certificate prepares students for entry-level help desk/IT support positions or to continue their education in the CIS Degree. Students learn about configuring, diagnosing, and repairing microcomputers and associated technologies. Students in this program become prepared to pass the A+ certification exams and succeed in the PC repair industry.

Networking Technology

From small businesses to a global corporation, practically every business has the need for computer networking. The need for qualified people to design, configure and maintain the networks that support computer systems in the home, office, and enterprise environments is growing rapidly.

Students in MWCC's CIS program learn the necessary skills to work as a successful network administrator or system manager. Major course work includes networking concepts, setting up user and group accounts, securing network resources, configuring and administering network printers, backup, auditing events, and monitoring network resources. In today's online environment, information security and web server technologies are also essential and this is a component of MWCC's program as well.



Technology programs at MWCC include:

- Automotive Technology
- Biotechnology / Biomanufacturing
- Broadcasting & Electronic Media
- Computer Graphic Design (Print/Web)
- Computer Information Systems
- Energy Management
- Liberal Arts: Pre-Engineering Track
- IT Support Specialist

Computer Programming

The days when programmers could sit in a closet writing code are long gone. Successful programmers need to address the human element in the use of technology for business. In today's technology-driven world, the person who succeeds is one who can go into a situation, decide how processes need to be changed, which technology would appropriately address the situation, create the program (or at least work with the programmers) and then train the end-user on how to use the new technology.

While MWCC's primary emphasis is to prepare you to enter the workforce in a networking or helpdesk/IT support position, the skills you learn at MWCC can be the start to a career path as a .NET developer, database programmer/analyst, HTML web developer/programmer, network support specialist, Oracle/SQL entry level programmer, PHP/MYSQL programmer. In fact, these are current positions of MWCC's alumni.

Five Reasons to Consider a Career in Information Technology

1.Computers and technology are everywhere.

From the GPS that helps us get home to the cell phone that helps us stay in touch, technology is part of our daily lives in a way never before seen in history. Having technological expertise won't be an optional skill for many of us for very much longer.

2. Computers and technology help us expand science and culture.

Research, databases, and algorithms are all part of cutting-edge science that advances fields like medicine, engineering, and business. Musicians can compose symphonies without ever touching a grand piano. Artists can create entire worlds without ever picking up a paint brush. Computer programs help us expand the reach of culture, the arts, science and business.

3. Advanced computing skills set you apart in your career advancement.

IT jobs are not only in-demand now, but they will only increase in the future. Even with some jobs being outsourced overseas, there is still strong demand for IT jobs right here in companies and organizations of every size. As computers are a staple business machine, the people that keep them running smoothly are a precious resource.

4. Computing is a required course.

Colleges and universities frequently require a computer science course to complete many degrees and certificates. Basic computer skills are only the beginning if you want to start a career in almost any field.

5. The options are endless!

IT and technology skills and jobs have an almost limitless potential as technology's role in daily life increases every day.

Whether you are a computer geek or a beginner, the Computer Information Systems (CIS) department at MWCC prepares you for lucrative careers in this in-demand field.

CIS Graduate Finds Silver Lining and New Career Following Layoff

Cindy Knox

Twenty-five years ago Cindy Knox was minding her own business in the accounting department when her then-boss asked, "Who wants to learn how to use a computer? Because...we're getting one." Never one to turn down a new opportunity, Knox volunteered and has never looked back.

She found out that she really enjoyed computers and technology and even took some IBM training courses, though no formal college classes. She advanced in the technology field, eventually working for a company until 2008, when the economy forced it to close its doors permanently. Out of a job she loved, Knox started the job search but quickly found out that her years of experience just weren't enough in the extremely competitive market.

So, Knox decided to go back to school. After researching programs at various local colleges, she chose the Computer Information Systems (CIS) program at Mount Wachusett Community College. Knowing she could complete the IT Support Specialist certificate in one year and then continue on to complete the associate degree in CIS during a second year, she enrolled at MWCC in 2009. In May 2011, she graduated with her associate degree and had already completed her IT certification, just as she had planned.

"It's not like it used to be in the '70s and '80s. Just having an interest and some experience with technology isn't enough. You need a degree and certifications to get a job in this industry now," Knox says.

Not only did her time at MWCC give her the broad sampling of all aspects of IT - from networks, security, and programming to databases and hardware - but she also learned non-technical skills such as making presentations, public speaking and professional writing that have served her well in her now-thriving career.

Today, Knox is the IT Systems Administrator for the Town of Shirley and, once again, she loves her job. Aside from the challenging and rewarding technical aspects of her job, Knox loves troubleshooting and helping the town's various staff personnel use technology to improve services and keep the community connected.

– Sarah McMaster

Computer Graphic Design for Print or Web

Graphic designers are responsible for the creative concept, design, layout and execution of digital materials such as online ads, logos, websites, and printed materials such as annual reports, catalogs, signage, kiosks, and posters.

MWCC offers associate and certificate computer graphic design programs that provide students with the visual design, communication, and computer graphic skills necessary to obtain an entry-level position in the field, or to continue their education at a four-year college or university.

Students learn basic and advanced techniques of creating effective, well-designed, interactive web sites, design theory, digital imaging, and electronic illustration skills and techniques. In addition, students learn basic hypertext markup languages and top level authoring software using what you see is what you get (WYSIWYG) technology.

Graphic design students also develop professional portfolios and take part in service learning projects in the community and at the college.

Feature

Reach New Heights in Your CAREER with a Laddering Plan

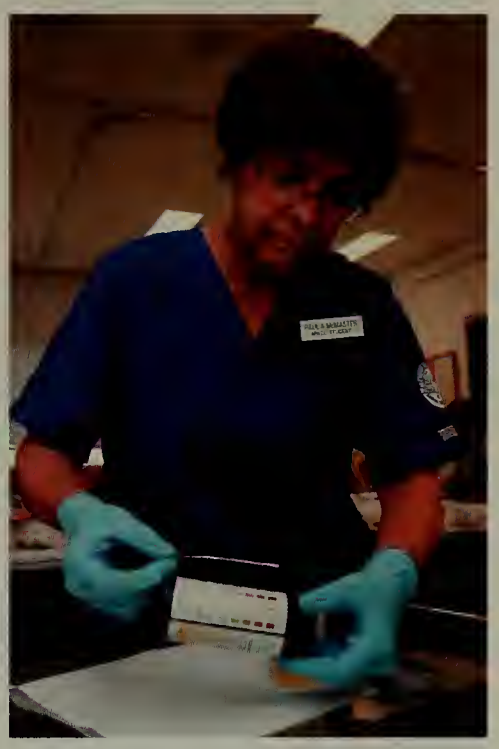
Taking it step-by-step will get you there!

By Angela Marini

Whether you are currently unemployed or just looking to continue your education, it can be difficult to find the time to earn your degree. Yet, many students are finding ways to earn their degree and obtain a job in that field in a very short amount of time with a plan referred to as "laddering."

A "laddering" plan allows a student to earn a certificate or complete a training program (which can take as little as one year or less to complete) and then "ladder" his or her skills into a degree program. This means that you could earn a certificate in a year, attain a career in that field, and then transfer your credits from the certificate program into the degree program and earn your associate degree.

"Career ladder programs allow students to quickly earn a credential that increases their workforce marketability," says Karen Costa, director of student success at Mount Wachusett Community College. "Each step of the way, students gain more education, which is an investment in their future.



Paula McMaster

A "laddering" plan allows a student to earn a certificate or complete a training program (which can take as little as one year or less to complete) and then "ladder" their skills into a degree program.

Studies show that with each degree level students earn, the more money they make and the less likely they are to become unemployed."

John White III of Gardner set his laddering plan in motion. Having received his first degree in Liberal Arts from MWCC in 1993, White suddenly faced unemployment after working for 12 years. "I took this opportunity to reinvent myself," says White, who came back to MWCC to earn his certificate in Biotechnology. By attending classes full time, he was able to earn his certificate in one year and obtain a job in the field. Now, he's just two classes away from an associate degree.

White decided to continue on and earn his associate degree for a couple of reasons: to help him someday earn a promotion and to show that he doesn't consider his education to be done. "I'm very interested in continuing my education at a four-year college."

John White III

Paula McMaster of Winchendon also created a ladder plan for herself. After earning a Medical Office certificate, she joined the working world. Years later, she is back as a full-time student earning an associate degree in Medical Assisting. "I originally wanted to go to school for another degree in the medical field," says McMaster. "However, I was nervous that I wouldn't be able to finish. By completing the certificate first, I was able to leave the college having earned something in one year and have the opportunity to work in a field that can help people."

After graduation in May, McMaster will be able to work in one of the fastest growing occupations in the next decade, according to the Occupational Handbook. "I'm very excited to graduate. I'm looking forward to working in a doctor's office or with the elderly. This program has been a great experience," says McMaster.

"Creating a 'ladder' plan is great, because life happens," says Costa. "Get your certificate under your belt so you have that in place and can use it to build your resume. Even if life - family, work, financial - circumstances interrupt your progress to an associate degree, you will always have that certificate in place."

Facts AND Finds

Over What Hill?

A person in which age group is most likely to create a successful start-up company?

a. 20-34 b. Over 55

How old is the average founder of a startup company?

a. 27 b. 40

An employee in which age group is more likely to have innovative ideas that will result in higher returns for their employer?

a. younger b. older

The answer to all three questions is b. Are you surprised to discover how many older workers are behind creative ventures and innovative ideas? Despite the stereotype of brash, young entrepreneurs who crack open markets with their fresh thinking, it's mature workers who are more likely to start their own successful companies and to have the latest, greatest ideas for their employers, according to a Newsweek.com article titled "The Golden Age of Innovation."

In this day of early retirement incentives and 50-somethings in search of new jobs, that's just the kind of information that might give older workers (and their employers) incentive to tap into all that wisdom rather than retire to the bingo hall and the golf course.

Where The Jobs Are

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that nearly half (about 45%) of all job openings in the next 10 years will be in the broad occupational categories that are mostly "middle skill." Middle skills jobs are defined as those that generally require some significant education and training beyond high school but less than a bachelor's degree. Even better news, according to The Workforce Alliance as part of its Skill2Compete campaign, is that many of these jobs will pay "quite high wages," particularly for jobs that require an associate degree or some particular vocational training and certification.

Source: www.skills2compete.org

"60 percent of new nurses and 80 percent of law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and emergency medical technicians come out of technical/community colleges."

Source: "Community College: Gateway to a 4-Year School" at www.princetonreview.com.

What Will College Get You?

The following statistics capture some of the benefits college graduates enjoy:

FINANCIAL

Median earnings

- High school graduates: $33,800
- Associate degree: $42,000
- Bachelor's degree: $55,700

Source: Education Pays 2010

Unemployment

- High school graduates: 9.7%
- Associate degree: 6.8%
- Bachelor's degree: 5.2%

Source: 2009 Bureau of Labor Statistics

HEALTH

Employer-Provided Health Insurance

- High-school graduates: 50%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 68%

Source: Education Pays 2010

Life Expectancy

- Age 75 – Life expectancy today of a 25-year-old with 12 years of education
- Age 82 – Life expectancy today of a 25-year-old with at least some college education

Source: 2008 Harvard Medical School Study

PERSONAL

Workers who feel that their work is important and provides a sense of accomplishment

- High school graduates: 56%
- Some college or associate degree: 56%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 79%

Source: Education Pays 2010

Happiness Index

A higher number indicates a greater level of reported happiness.

- High school or less: 31
- Some college: 35
- College graduate: 34
- Post graduate: 36

Source: Harris Interactive Poll Annual Happiness Index 2010

SOCIAL

Voting Rates

- High school graduates: 57%
- Some college or associate degree: 69%
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 80%

Source: Education Pays 2010

Volunteering

- High school graduates: 19% (volunteered median of 48 hours/year)
- Some college or associate degree: 30% (volunteered median of 50 hours/year)
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 43% (volunteered a median of 54 hours/year)

Source: Education Pays 2010

Feature

A Bounty of Options to Suit Every Interest

What's your passion? Mount Wachusett Community College offers courses in many subject areas. You can choose from day, evening and online courses and attend campuses conveniently located in Gardner, Leominster and Devens, as well as a program-specific site in Fitchburg. Your options include:

Subject/Campus	Devens	Gardner	Leominster	Fitchburg	Online
Accounting		X	X		X
Anthropology		X			X
Art		X			
American Sign Language		X			
Automotive		X			
Broadcasting		X			X
Biology	X	X	X		X
Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing	X				
Business		X	X		X
Cooperative Education		X			
Computer Graphic Design		X			X
Complementary Health Care	X	X	X		
Chemistry	X	X			
Computer Information Systems	X	X	X		X
Criminal Justice		X	X		
Clinical Lab Science		X			
Dental Hygiene				X	
Earth Science		X			
Early Childhood Education		X			
Economics		X	X		X
Education		X			
Energy Management	X				
English as a Second Language			X		
English/Literature	X	X	X		X
Fitness Leadership/Exercise Science		X			
Finance					X
First Year Experience		X	X		X

Subject/Campus	Devens	Gardner	Leominster	Fitchburg	Online
Geography					X
Health Sciences		X			
History		X	X		X
Human Services		X	X		X
Humanities	X	X	X		X
Interdisciplinary Studies		X			
Medical Assisting	X	X			X
Math	X	X	X		X
Management	X	X	X		X
Marketing		X	X		X
Massage Therapy		X			
Music		X			X
Natural Resources		X			
Nursing	X	X			X
Physical Education	X	X	X		X
Philosophy		X			
Photography		X			X
Physics		X			
Phlebotomy		X			
Paralegal		X	X		X
Political Science		X	X		X
Psychology	X	X	X		X
Physical Therapy	X	X			
Reading		X	X		X
Sociology	X	X	X		X
Spanish	X	X	X		X
Theater	X	X	X		X

Devens

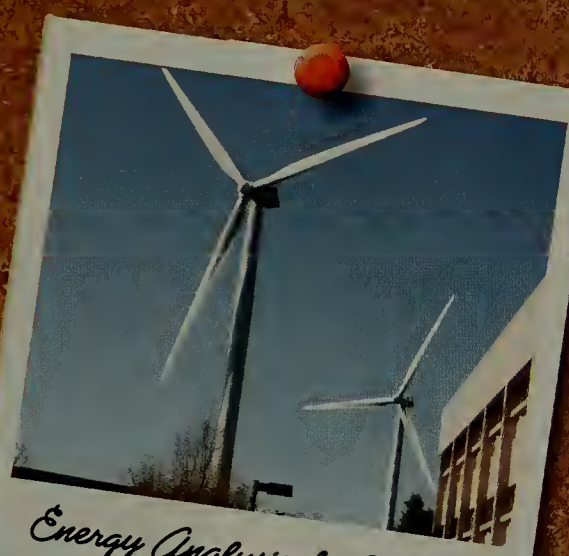
Gardner

Leominster

Greenhouse Management

A Sampling of Wicked Popular Courses

ART101	Introduction to Painting
ART113	Introduction to Studio
BCT124	Music Recording & Mixing Techniques
BIO101	Introduction to Nutrition
BIO112	The Biology of Cancer
BIO140	Introduction to Greenhouse Management
BUS112	Customer Relations
CGD107	Designing Business Graphics
CIS143	PC Maintenance
CJU140	American Policing
EGM125	Energy Analysis & Auditing
ENG245	Film Appreciation
HIS140	History of New England
MAS202	Medical Coding & Billing
PHO115	Introduction to Digital Photography
PLS110	Litigation
SOC206	Marriage & Family
SPA103	Spanish for the Health Care Professional
THE106	Fundamentals of Acting II



Energy Analysis & Auditing

History of New England

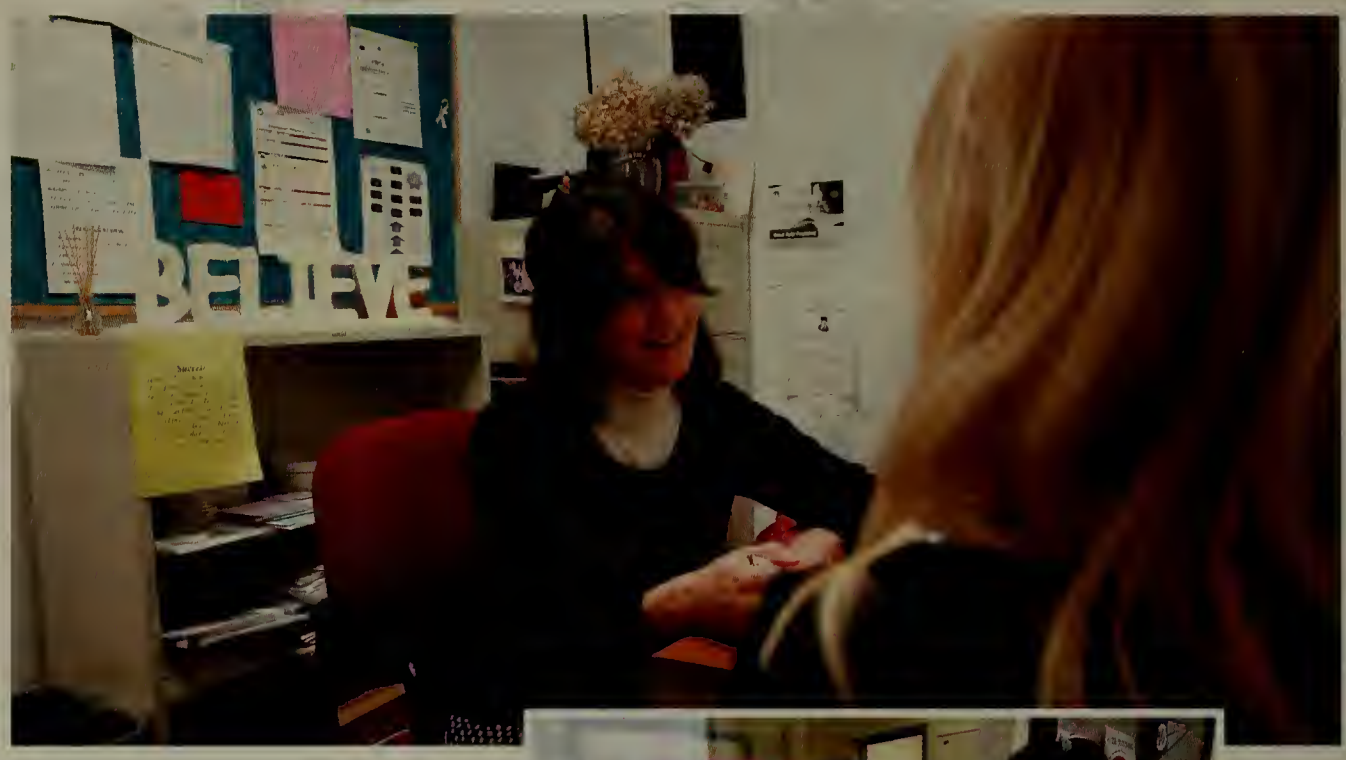
Introduction to Painting

Feature

Demystifying Enrollment & Financial Aid

Follow these quick steps to get started on your academic degree!

Finally decided to attend Mount Wachusett Community College, but not sure how or even where to start? Just follow this step-by-step list that explains what you'll need to do to get started, and how to apply for financial aid, as well. See you at orientation!



Enrollment

1. Admission Application

Complete an admission application at www.mwcc.edu/apply. Questions about applying can be made to the Office of Admissions at 978-630-9110 or admissions@mwcc.mass.edu.

2. Submit Supporting Documents

Supply to Mount Wachusett Community College, Office of Admissions, 444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440 additional admission application documentation, including:

- Application fee of $10 (waived for online application)
- High school transcript or GED Score Report
- College transcripts (if you have any)

3. You're In!

When you are admitted to the college, you will receive the acceptance letter in the mail.

4. Apply for Financial Aid

This sounds scary, but it's not! See the simple financial aid application steps on the next page.

5. New Student Welcome

Attend a New Student Welcome Session. At this event, you will receive important information about enrolling and completing your college placement test. Reservations for New Student Welcome Sessions can be made by calling the Testing Center at 978-630-9244.

6. Academic Advising

Meet with your academic advisor. Advising appointments can be made by calling the Advising Center at 978-630-9109.

7. Health Records

Submit your immunization and medical history information to Mount Wachusett Community College, Health Services, 444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440. You'll hear more about this after you are admitted.

8. Attend Orientation

Orientation takes place shortly before you start your first term. This is where you will learn a lot of information that will assist you in your first term on campus. Don't miss it!

9. Ask Questions!

Contact MWCC's Office of Admissions at 978-630-9110 or admissions@mwcc.mass.edu with any questions about enrolling.

Just follow this step-by-step list that explains what you'll need to do to get started, and how to apply for financial aid, as well. See you at orientation!

Financial Aid

1. Get a FAFSA PIN

All financial aid applicants must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. To complete the FAFSA, you will need a FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN). If you are dependent, your parents are also required to have their own FAFSA PIN (so you need one PIN for you and one PIN for mom or dad!). FAFSA PINs can be accessed at www.pin.ed.gov.

2. Complete the FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the financial aid application that all students at most colleges complete to apply for financial aid. The FAFSA can be completed at www.fafsa.gov. When you complete the FAFSA, be sure to include the MWCC Title IV Financial Aid Code, which is 002172, as your first school of choice.

3. Watch for Paperwork Requests

The MWCC Financial Aid Office will send you requests for additional paperwork via email. This might include requests for tax forms or verification worksheets. Return these forms to Mount Wachusett Community College, Financial Aid Office, 444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440, as soon as possible.

4. Apply for Scholarships

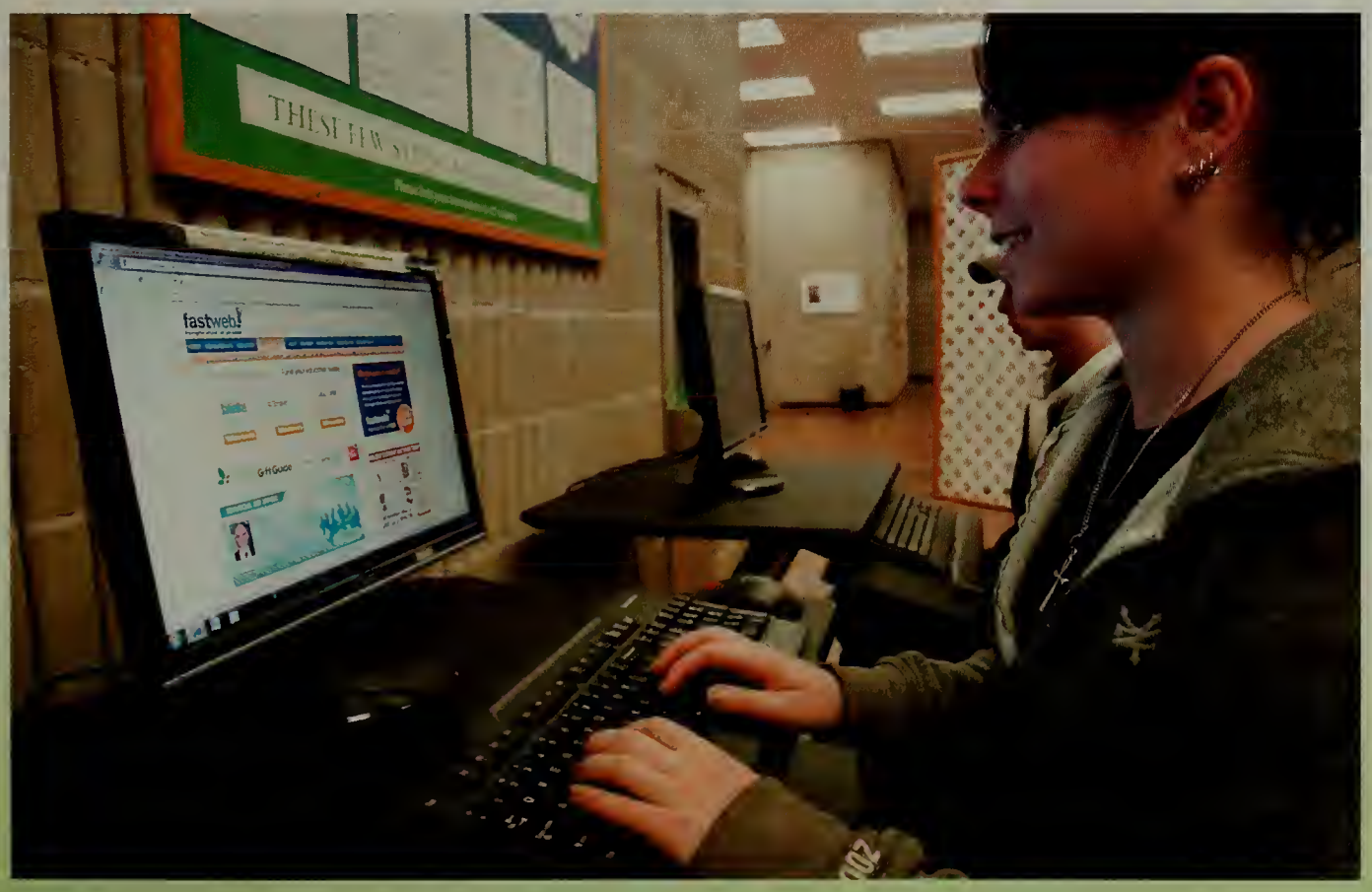
Numerous scholarships are potentially available! Make yourself as eligible for financial assistance as possible by completing the MWCC scholarship application at www.mwcc.edu/pdfs/scholarshipapplication.pdf.

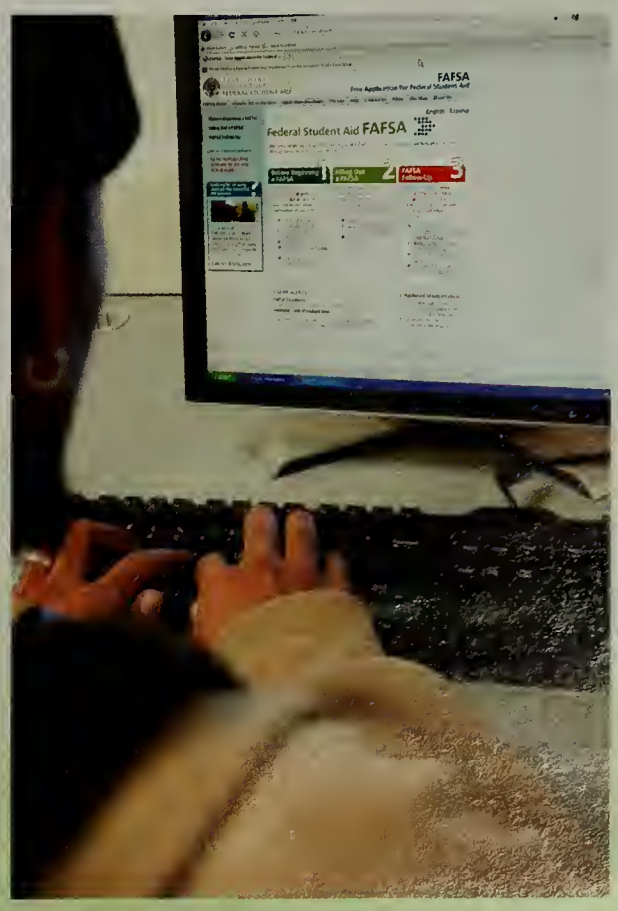
5. Watch Your Email

You will be notified of your financial aid award via email.

6. Financial Aid Questions?

If you have questions about the financial aid process, contact the MWCC Financial Aid Office at 978-630-9169.





Feature

Moving Forward ... in Reverse

"Reverse transfer" students stay the course

By Angela Marini

Emily Brillon, a 2010 graduate of Oakmont Regional High School, is currently using Mount Wachusett Community College as a stepping stone to reach her dream of becoming an art museum manager in New York City. However, working in a museum or even attending MWCC was never part of her original plan.

Brillon, a Westminster resident, first attended a private four-year college in Vermont to study communications. While there, she took a class in gallery curating and management and decided to change her career plans. Since then, she has been accepted in the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City, where she will work toward a degree in art management. Before she makes that move, she's attending MWCC to earn the credits she needs to make this happen.

"I saw 'The Mount' as an extremely convenient way to get where I want to go," says Brillon, who is now enrolled as a sophomore at MWCC. "I left Vermont because I figured out what I want to do; what industry I want to work in. I want to be immersed in the art industry and New York City is the right location."

For Brillon, MWCC is the fastest way for her to achieve her dreams. It has also been a great way to save money. While at MWCC, Brillon is pursuing her associate degree, while working two jobs and taking on a full course load. "I really like the classes. I'm able to take a few day and night classes. I'm staying really busy!"

Amanda Beahn didn't originally plan to attend MWCC, either. In fact, she already has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from a public, four-year university. Nonetheless, Beahn is currently enrolled at MWCC, as well.

While Beahn was earning her bachelor's degree, she realized she wanted to work in the medical field. After job shadowing a nurse and a physical therapist for a day, she decided that physical therapy was the field for her.

Fortunately, MWCC provided Beahn with an excellent opportunity to earn her physical therapist assistant degree at an affordable price. "It's great!" says Beahn. "So many of my classes transferred and I can take some classes online so I don't have to commute." Beahn, a resident of Worcester, is also happy with how seamlessly she was able to transfer into MWCC.

What Brillon and Beahn did is a trend often called "reverse transfer," which means that a student transfers to a community college from a four-year college or university instead of transferring to a four-year college from a community college.

Amanda Beahn

Emily Brillon

Reverse transfer students often conclude that it is better to pay community college rates for a course than it is to pay the four-year college rates."

Glenn Roberts, Associate Dean of Student Support Services

"The cost of education is becoming more and more of a consideration for students. Reverse transfer students often conclude that it is better to pay community college rates for a course than it is to pay the four-year college rates," says Glenn Roberts, associate dean of Student Support Services. "Another benefit is that students can start with a 'clean slate.' If students did not perform well academically at another college, they can come to MWCC and start fresh. Their old grade point average does not transfer in with the credits. MWCC will award credit for the course - assuming the grade was a "C" or higher - but we do not calculate the grade into the student's GPA here." With so many transfer credits that can be applied to a certificate or an associate degree program, students are able to earn degrees in a shorter amount of time.

"Reverse transfer students often come from much larger institutions after discovering that wasn't the right environment for them," Roberts adds. "Many students prefer the smaller class sizes and the wide variety of services offered at MWCC. Everything they need is right at their finger tips, and the relationships established are often ongoing and substantive."

Eventually, both Brillon and Beahn are looking to continue their education. Brillon would like to earn her master's degree in France, while Beahn is interested in earning an M.B.A. Brillon and Beahn both believe that MWCC has provided them with the fastest possible way to move forward with their goals, even in reverse!

MWCC offers classes where and when you want them:

Mount Wachusett Community College
www.mwcc.edu

- Day, evening, and over 80 online courses
- Campuses in Gardner, Leominster & Devens
- Options between 8 and 15 week courses
- Over 30 programs that can be completed in the evening

"I earned my degree almost entirely online."

James Kelley, a software quality engineer with a busy schedule, relied on the convenience of online classes to complete his Computer Information Systems Degree. James graduated and plans on continuing toward his bachelor's degree through MWCC's 3+1 program. He's completing three years at MWCC, at MWCC prices, and his final year at a private college … all online.

I did it.
You can too.

Fast Forward Your Career & Life With Noncredit Courses

Need quick training to start a career? Looking to take a class for fun?

MWCC offers noncredit classes that enhance your home, work, and personal life. No grades or exams (except for licensure courses). Just learning and enjoyment!

- Green/Renewable Energy
- Medical Coding & Billing, Medical Transcription & Medical Editor
- Mind, Body & Spirit
- Music
- Test Preparation
- Website Development
- Comedy
- Computers
- Crafts & Hobbies
- Photography

Go to www.mwcc.edu/cf or call 978-630-9525 for the spring 2012 brochure!

Start near . . . Go far

Anywhere . . . Anytime . . . MWCC Will Get You There!

Discover the many educational opportunities that Mount Wachusett Community College has to help you achieve your dreams. Whether you are a first time student, seeking skills for a second career, looking to transfer credits, or wanting to attain an education without breaking the bank—MWCC is for you. With over 40 degree and certificate programs, as well as over 80 online course options, you just can't go wrong. And did we mention affordability? There is no better educational value in the area for such a low cost and with such flexibility.

Associate Degrees

Accounting Concentration*
Allied Health Concentration*
Art—Professional
Art—Traditional Program
Audio Engineering Concentration*
Automotive Technology
Automotive Technology—General Motors
Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing
Broadcasting & Electronic Media
Business Administration—Career
Business Administration—Transfer
Clinical Laboratory Science
Communications Track*
Complementary Health Care
Computer Graphic Design—Print
Computer Graphic Design—Web Design
Computer Information Systems
Criminal Justice—Corrections Concentration*
Criminal Justice— Law Enforcement Concentration*
Dental Hygiene
Early Childhood Education—Career
Early Childhood Education—Transfer
Elementary Education Track*
Energy Management
Fire Science Technology
Fitness Leadership & Exercise Science Track*
General Studies
History & Political Science Track*
Human Services
Liberal Arts & Sciences
Manufacturing Technology—Plastics
Medical Assisting
Natural Resources
Nursing
Paralegal Studies
Photography Concentration*
Physical Therapist Assistant
Pre-Engineering Track*
Theatre Arts Track*
Video/Film Concentration*
Yoga Teacher Training Concentration*

Certificate Programs

Accounting
Allied Health
Automotive Technology
Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing
Business Administration
Complementary Health Care
Computer Graphic Design—Print
Computer Graphic Design—Web Design
Dental Assisting (*January Start*)
Energy Management
Human Service Technician
IT Support Specialist
Law Enforcement
Medical Coding & Billing
Medical Office
Office Assistant
Paralegal
Practical Nurse
Professional Photography
Small Business Management

Other Options

3+1 Baccalaureate Degree Completion Option
Emergency Medical Technician Certificate of Completion
English as a Second Language Courses
Honors Program
Nurse Assistant Courses
Phlebotomy Certificate of Completion
Radiologic Technologist Articulation Agreement

* Denotes a concentration of an associate degree

NEW!

Automotive Technology—General Motors
Dental Assisting
Fire Science Technology (now FESHE certified)
Broadcasting & Electronic Media concentrations in:

- Audio Engineering
- Photography
- Video/Film

MWCC Campus Locations & Hours

Gardner Campus
444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440
Office hours:
Mon - Thu, 8 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Fri, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
978-632-6600
Email: admissions@mwcc.mass.edu

Leominster Campus
100 Erdman Way, Leominster, MA 01453
Office hours:
Mon - Thu, 8:30 a.m. - 7 p.m., Fri, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
978-630-9810
Email: leominster@mwcc.mass.edu

Devens Campus
One Jackson Place
27 Jackson Road, Devens, MA 01434
Mon - Thu, 8:30 a.m. - 7 p.m., Fri, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
978-630-9569
Email: devens@mwcc.mass.edu

Mount Wachusett Community College

AA/EEO Institution

877-324-6815 www.mwcc.edu/cf